DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 205 119 HE 014 145

AUTHOR Arter, Margaret H.
TITLE Career Advancement from Institutional Research to Academic Management Utilizing Institutional Research. AIR Forum 1981 Paper.
PUB DATE May 81
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research (21st, Minneapolis, MN, May 17-20, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Deans; Accountability; *Administrator Responsibility; Administrators; Budgeting; *Career Ladders; Collective Bargaining; *College Administration; Educational Assessment; Educational Finance; Faculty Evaluation; Financial Problems; Higher Education; Information Needs; *Institutional Research; Program Evaluation; *Research Skills; Retrenchment; *Staff Utilization; Student Personnel Services
IDENTIFIERS *AIR Forum

ABSTRACT

The need for the skills and services provided by college institutional researchers even during a period of financial constraint, which prevents having a distinct institutional research office, is addressed. It is suggested that institutional researchers can be utilized in management and administrative functions. For example, the academic vice president or dean for academic affairs may be heavily involved in program evaluation, the improvement of instruction, faculty development, faculty evaluation, and the consideration of options for faculty reduction. Some of the time of the academic officer may be allocated to specially assigned institutional research efforts. The dean of student services, who is educated in information analysis and evaluation techniques, may be involved in institutional research to improve the delivery of student services and increase the effectiveness of staff training. Student outcomes assessments affect the planning and delivery of services. The institutional research officer may be sought after by fiscal management as it prepares the annual budget and calculates its yearly schedule of reports. Creative collective bargaining also requires extensive fiscal information, with projected revenues, wage, and fringe benefits forming the basis for multiyear agreements. Both management and labor will avail themselves of the former institutional research officer to give them a firm foundation of data before approaching the bargaining table. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED205119

CAREER ADVANCEMENT FROM INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH TO ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT UTILIZING INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Association for Institutional Research

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

A Paper Presented at the Association for Institutional Research Annual Forum, Leamington Hotel, Minneapolis, Minnesota, at the Panel "Community College Institutional Research: Toward 2001", Session 19K, May 19, 1981, 3:30 P.M.

HE 014 145

Margaret H. Arter
Dean of Instruction
Palo Verde College
Blythe, California 92225

THE ASSOCIATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

This paper was presented at the Twenty-First Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research held at the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 17-20, 1981. This paper was reviewed by the AIR Forum Publications Committee and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC Collection of Forum Papers.

Mary Corcoran
University of Minnesota
(Editor, AIR Forum Publications)

CAREER ADVANCEMENT FROM INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH TO ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT UTILIZING INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

In recent years it may appear that attrition has set in among the ranks of the institutional researcher in both two-year and four-year institutions. This is not to be construed as a lack of commitment or loyalty to the profession. Some of our most devoted members have mustered their tremendous array of management talents acquired during the years as the institutional research officer to emerge as academic leaders.

I.R. officers have not disappeared. In most instances they are plying their trade, among numerous other duties, behind a door with a new nameplate as they continue to collect and manipulate data.

In times of a base of lessening fiscal support, maintaining a separate institutional research office may no longer appear feasible in many institutions. Functions may be decentralized from one job description and added to several. The academic vice president or dean for academic affairs may be heavily involved in program evaluation, the improvement of instruction, faculty development, faculty evaluation, and in recent months options for faculty reduction as stipulated by legal, budgetary, and political implications.

In between sitting at grievance committee hearings for both professional and para-professional personnel, and at negotiation sessions for collective bargaining, the academic officer may find time and effort to assist the Office of the President or Chancellor in its specially assigned institutional research efforts. That is master planning for the entire

college or system with specific attention to revised mission statements (frequently caused by state cutbacks and declining local revenue), goal setting, and strategic planning or marketing. Forecasting, after careful assessment, is entrusted to no one other than the assistant to the president, who has been moved upstairs from the I.R. office. Speech writing, arranging board meetings, and operating levy renewal campaigns fall into this job description when the assistant is not implementing new management systems and the four-day week developed by the chief officer. When accreditation times roll around, the chief academic officer joins with chief administrative officer and they quickly devise a means of institutional evaluation for self-study and accreditation, which also can serve as a basis for state board review.

The Dean of Student Services may join them at this conference. This administrator is well schooled in information analysis and evaluation techniques. After all the dean has a doctorate in educational psychology and is accustomed to formulating a research design and preparing effective evaluation reports. The dean's background in institutional research assists him/her in the techniques of futures research. This expedites the delivery of student services and increases the effectiveness of staff training.

Presently the Dean of Student Services and the Dean of Academic Affairs are coordinating their efforts in support services for students by a study of grading practices and block scheduling. They are also currently reviewing the criteria for the new institutional administrator

evaluation instrument developed by the Office of the President with a keen awareness of internal politics.

Student attrition studies have led to further student tracking studies and even greater care in the exploration of access, student decision making, enrollment options, and modifications of such student services as orientation, registration, career counseling, academic advising, and learning assistance. Student outcomes assessments affect the planning and delivery of services.

Fiscal management begins to develop its own I.R. component in-house. Traditional enrollment projections are further bent and formed in the white heat of the furnace generated by the state coordinating board and the legislature. They conform not to an academic model, but rather to the beguiling illusions of a juggler manipulating the variables to yield the greatest return for the institution. The game becomes one of outguessing changing funding formulae. A common activity will be anticipating and reacting to statewide systems futures as a base for local decision making. Shrinking resources and rising costs will require sound fiscal and demographic data before painful and drastic measures are inflicted upon educational systems.

The I.R. officer may be sought after by fiscal management as it prepares the annual budget and calculates its yearly schedule of reports. Here the officer has a choice of worksites other than the traditional institutional ones. He/she may be lured by the executive or legislative bodies as well as the traditional academic ones. Creative collective

bargaining also requires extensive fiscal information, with projected revenues, wage, and fringe benefits forming the basis for multi-year agreements. Both management and labor will avail themselves of the former institutional research officer to give them a firm foundation of data before approaching the bargaining table.

The I.R. officer is alive and well. The nameplate and the calling cards may have changed, but the demand for these specialist services is greater than ever. They merely originate directly where the application rests. Higher education, particularly in the community college, can no longer afford the luxury of a distinct institutional research officer. That title was lost in the last year's administrative staff R.I.F. of twenty-five percent. But the skills are still there and are being utilized in management and administrative functions.